THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R. L. BHATIA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The news item refers to the reported transfer of a design for a nuclear bomb to Pakistan from China.

(c) China and Pakistan have been made fully aware of Government's apprehensions regarding the clandestine nature and weapons orientation of Pakistan's nuclear programme.

(d) Yes, Sir. Government keep under constant review all developments having a bearing on India's security and take appropriate measures to safeguard the national interest.

Peace proposal for SAARC Countries

3676. SHRI S.K.T. RAMACHANDRAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state what steps are being taken by Government to bring the SAARC Countries come closer and to have peace in the region?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R.L. BHATIA): During the recent State Visit to India, 1—3 October, 1992, of the Sri Lankan President in his capacity as the Chairman of the Sixth SAARC Summit, our Prime Minister and the Sir Lankan President affirmed the validity of SAARC as a forum for achieving social goals and developing the region's human resource potential. Prime Minister reiterated our commitment to strengthen the SAARC.

As agreed under the SAARC Charter, a copy of which is available in the Parliament Library, India is wholeheartedly cooperating with other SAARC countries for implementation, coordination and monitoring of programmes in twelve agreed areas, i.e., Agriculture (including Forestry), Communication, Education and Culture, Environment, Health and Population Activities, Meteorology, Prohibition of Drug Trafficking and Drug Abuse, Rural Development, Science and Technology, Tourism, Transport, Women in Development. Apart from these agreed areas of cooperation, SAARC has also entered into cooperation in core economic areas such as Trade, Manufacture and Services.

By way of cooperation with SAARC Member-Countries in all the above mentioned areas, India hopes that many of the differences which are manifested will disappear and all the SAARC countries will enjoy peace as a 'divident'.

Strenthtening relations with our neighbours on a bilateral basis as well as through the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation is of the highest priority.

India and Bangladesh are close neighbours with common historical and cultural links with wide ranging bilateral relations. However, given the close proximity, the long border and the shared history, it is natural that many bilateral issues remain to be resolved. Our approach is to aim at resolution of these issues in a spirit of understanding and coopeation and arrive at a fair and equitable solution taking into account the interests of both sides. We are engaged in a continuous dialogue with Bangladesh to resolve outstanding bilateral issues such as sharing of waters of major rivers, illegal immigartions from Bangladesh, repatriation of Chakma refugees to Bangladesh, etc. bilateral relations with Bhutan 'have been traditionally very close. Visits have been exchanged at the Ministerial and official levels in the last one year to hold discussions on matters of mutual interest. A Memorandum of Understanding for taking up the preparation of the Detailed Project Report of the 120 M.W. Bunakha Hydel Project was signed between India and Bhutan last month, November 1992.

Our close relations with Maldives are being further consolidated with bilateral cooperation in economic and technical fields. We have identified selected sectors

like Infrastructure, Manpower Resource Development, Health, Communication and Trade. There have been regular high level contacts between the two countries, with President Gayoom having visited India several times. The two countries have a common approach on a large number of issues.

Our traditionally close and cordial relations with Nepal were further strengthened and deepened during the last one year. Prime Minister's recent visit to Nepal, 19—21 October 1992, has contributed significantly to strengthening economic cooperation in the qualitatively new era of relations since the emergence of multi-party democracy in Nepal.

We have consistently urged Pakistan to abandon its negative approach the join us in earnest efforts to reduce tension and build mutual trust and confidence. We remain firm in our desire to seek harmonious and good neighbourly relations through the ongoing process of bilateral talks in accordance with the Simla Agreement. Prime Ministers of the two countries have met five times in the recent period. In pursuance of the Confidence Building Measures proposed by India in 1990, six rounds of Foreign Secretary level talks have also taken place. Official technical level disucssions have also been held on various outstanding issues like Siachen, Sir Creek, Tulbal, etc. We remain committed to the process of a dialogue.

The recent State Visit of the Sri Lankan President in October 1992, was availed of by both sides of review various bilateral matters such as repatriation of Sri Lankan refugges from India, practical problems faced by fishermen from both countries straying in each other's waters, and economic cooperation, etc. The two sides expressed satisfaction over the on-going repatriation from India of Sri Lankan refugees and agreed to continue cooperation in this regard. On the question of problems faced by fisermen, two sides agreed to treat such cases in a spirit of mutual understanding and accommodation and also agreed to initiate disussions on the subject at the level of senior officials. During the Sri Lankan President's visit, the two sides expressed satisfaction at the progress with regard to the various proposals under the Indo-Sri Lankan Joint Commission, the first meeting of which was held in New Delhi at the level of Foreign Ministers in January 1992 giving an impetus to bilateral cooperation in various fields.

Introduction of GPF for the Employees of Public Sector Undertakings

@3677. SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any proposal to introduce General Provident Fund to the employees of various public sector undertakings bringing them at par with Government servants; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the names of the public sector undertakings which are likely to adopt the scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (DEPARTMENT OF HEAVY INDUSTRY AND DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC ENTERPRISES) (SHRI P.K. THUNGON): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Industrial production of development countries

3678. SHRI MD. SALIM: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state per capita US dollar value of industrial production of top ten developing countries as well as of India during 1989-90, 1990-91 and 1991-92?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT) (SMT. KRISHNA SAHI): A statement giving the per capita

@Previously Unstarred Question 3139, transferred from 14th December, 1992.